



# NIGER

2023 IFRC network country plan

Funding Requirement **CHF 22.7M**

Appeal number **MAANE002**

## In support of the Red Cross Society of Niger



**8**

National Society branches



**256**

National Society staff



**10,000**

National Society volunteers

## People to be reached



**350,000**

Ongoing emergency operations



**90,000**

Climate and environment



**168,000**

Disasters and crises



**227,000**

Health and wellbeing



**46,000**

Values, power and inclusion

## IFRC network multiyear focus

### Emergency response

- food insecurity

### Longer term needs

- climate resilient livelihoods
- protracted population movement
- anticipatory action • disaster risk reduction

### Capacity development

- branch development
- internal systems strengthening
  - youth and volunteering
  - resource mobilization

## Key country data

**Population** **25.1M**

**INFORM severity rating** **high**

**Climate ND-GAIN Index rank** **27**

**Human Development Index rank** **189**

**Population below poverty level** **40.8%**

## Hazards



Food insecurity



Drought



Climate change



Poverty



Violence



Population movement

## Funding requirements

**Total 22.7M** CHF

Through the IFRC

**9.6M** CHF

Through Participating National Societies

**11.6M** CHF

Host National Society

**1.5M** CHF

### IFRC Breakdown

**7M** CHF

Ongoing emergency operations

### Longer term needs

**328,000** CHF

Climate and environment

**1.4M** CHF

Disasters and crises

**601,000** CHF

Health and wellbeing

**260,000** CHF

Enabling local actors

## Ongoing emergencies

### MDRNE026

Niger – Food Insecurity Crisis  
**Emergency Appeal**

*folded under [MGR60001](#) Africa Hunger  
Crisis Emergency Appeal*

## Participating National Societies

Belgian Red Cross

British Red Cross

The Canadian Red Cross Society\*

Danish Red Cross

Finnish Red Cross

French Red Cross

Italian Red Cross

Japanese Red Cross Society\*

Luxembourg Red Cross

Red Cross of Monaco\*

The Netherlands Red Cross\*

Spanish Red Cross

Swedish Red Cross



# NATIONAL SOCIETY PROFILE

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**The Red Cross Society of Niger** was established on 13 July 1963. It was recognized by the Ministry of the Interior by decree on 7 September 1965, and it was admitted as a member of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in the same year.

Based on its auxiliary role to the public authorities, and relating to the the Ministry of Public Health, the Niger Red Cross carries out a range of humanitarian and development activities across Niger. It has 256 employees and about 10,000 community volunteers, with eight regional branches in Agadez, Diffa, Dosso, Maradi, Niamey, Tahoua, Tillabéri and Zinder. In accordance with its mission, the National Society intervenes throughout the national territory in the areas of health, nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene and first aid. It also works on disaster preparedness and response, including food security and livelihoods, and using cash and voucher assistance when appropriate. Other activities include protection, restoring family links, and education, as well as volunteer promotion, communications and the promotion of humanitarian principles and values.

The strategic plan 2021-2026 of the Niger Red Cross is structured around the following strategic objectives:

- Vulnerable communities, including local populations and displaced persons in target areas, anticipate and respond promptly to crises and disasters while ensuring their sustainable recovery in a protective environment by 2026

- Vulnerable populations affected by conflicts and disasters, including children aged 6 to 59 months, girls and pregnant women and adolescent girls residing in target areas, have access to quality health and nutrition services, including in emergency situations
- The National Society has a network of competent volunteers who remain faithful to their mission
- The National Society maintains good strategic partnership relations with the actors of the Movement and outside the Movement
- The National Society improves the quality and impact of its programmes by 2026

With its partners, the Niger Red Cross has identified five main priorities for 2023 – with protection, gender and inclusion, and community engagement and accountability remaining cross-cutting themes:

- Preparedness and response to disasters and crises, including food insecurity
- Prevention and management of diseases and epidemics
- Eco-resilience in the face of climate and environmental crises
- Response to population movements, including migration
- Organizational development

## IFRC NETWORK ACTION IN 2023

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### Joint situational analysis

In Niger, more than four million households are facing the devastating effects of food insecurity caused by consecutive failed rainy seasons and decades of desertification of the Sahel. As well as having inadequate access to food, Niger's population is exposed to several threats which affect well-being, including natural hazards, epidemics such as measles, malaria, meningitis and cholera, and insecurity, leading to population movement and increased competition over resources.

Between 2.5 and 3.3 million people are food insecure in Niger, according to the findings of the Integrated Phase

Classification (IPC phase 3–5). This number increased to 3.6 to 4.4 million people between June and August 2022, due to a delayed rainy season and irregular distribution of rainfall, long periods of drought and a high risk of flooding, leading to the loss of crops, property and life in exposed localities. Due to the security situation, herd movements have been disrupted and livestock concentrated in secure areas, and this caused conflict between farmers, and the emergence of animal diseases.

70 per cent of Niger's population work in subsistence agriculture, which is affected by volatile weather conditions, so its economy is highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change.

Growing domestic insecurity and regional political instability have affected the country's overall economic performance, public finances, access to markets and basic services. There have also been missed educational opportunities and growing social tensions.

Ranked eight out of 191 countries by the INFORM Risk Index 2022, Niger is one of the highest-risk countries in the world. Between 1973 and 2018, an estimated 21,000 disaster cases were recorded, including 16,000 droughts (73 per cent), 2,300 floods (10 per cent), 2,000 epidemics, 480 epizootic disease outbreaks and 220 bushfires. On average, four million people are affected by drought each year, but this number rises significantly when the droughts are severe.

Niger's fertility rate remains high, with an average of 7.6 children per woman and an annual population growth rate of 3.9 per cent – the highest in the world. As a result, investment in core priority sectors such as health, education, food security and livelihoods are of vital importance.

Niger's hot and dry Sahelian climate sees rainfall that is often low and poorly distributed. Severe floods and droughts disrupt agriculture and feed production, with serious consequences for the country's food and nutritional security.

In 2021, heavy rains caused large-scale flooding in Niger, mainly in the Maradi, Zinder and Agadez regions. The Niger River reached an alarming water level of 640 centimetres, up from an average of 550 centimetres, damaging houses as well as crops and hydro-agricultural developments. The floods were responsible for fatalities and the destruction of more than 16,000 houses, affecting more than 210,000 people, 123,000 of whom were children.

Niger has a poorly diversified economy, with agriculture accounting for 40 per cent of its GDP. More than 10 million people, 41.8 per cent of the population, were living in extreme poverty in 2021. The country ranks second to last in the UNDP's Human Development Index, and the gross national income is estimated to be US\$463 per person. Niger's economy grew by 5.8 per cent in 2019 but slowed to 3.6 per cent in 2020 and could fall further still as a result of health, climate, and security shocks and crises.

COVID-19 and security spending has reduced tax incomes and increased debt vulnerability in Niger. Countercyclical fiscal policy to mitigate health and

security shocks has led to an increase in public spending and a fiscal deficit above the West African Economic and Monetary Union norm of three per cent of GDP. This deficit has implications for the country's debt level, which was more than 50 per cent of GDP in 2021.

## Ongoing emergency response

For real-time information on emergencies, see [IFRC GO page Niger](#).

Emergency appeal [MDRNE026 Niger](#) – Food Insecurity Crisis – folded under [MGR60001 Africa Hunger Crisis Emergency Appeal](#)

Appeal launched: 9 May 2022

Appeal ends: 30 April 2024

People affected: 4.4 million

People to be assisted: 430,000

Niger is currently affected by an extreme food security crisis, with 4.4 million people in need of immediate humanitarian assistance, while ongoing security problems in the Sahel region exacerbate the socio-economic vulnerabilities of the population. In line with its Pan-African Zero Hunger Initiative, the IFRC has developed an operational strategy to implement its Food Insecurity Crisis Emergency Appeal in support of the National Society in Niger, mobilizing resources for humanitarian assistance in the regions most affected by food insecurity.

In Niger, more than four million households are experiencing food insecurity caused by consecutive failed rainy seasons and decades of increasing desertification of the Sahel. They have inadequate access to food and are exposed to several threats affecting their well-being, including epidemics of measles, malaria, meningitis and cholera, natural hazards and insecurity. This leads to population movements and people competing for resources.

The Integrated Phase Classification (IPC phase 3–5) reported that between 2.5 and 3.3 million people are food insecure in Niger, and 3.6 to 4.4 million people were food insecure between June and August 2022. This is because there was a delayed rainy season, irregular rainfall, droughts and flooding – leading to the loss of human and animal life and damage to crops and property.

## Short description of the emergency operational strategy

The operational strategy of the Appeal includes:

- The provision of immediate humanitarian support through multi-purpose cash and voucher assistance, and the creation of saving schemes
- Nutrition activities, including community nutrition centres and the promotion of healthy nutrition practices

While activities implemented under the Emergency Appeal address acute and emergency needs, and protect livelihoods, the IFRC's plan addresses the root causes of hunger and aims to break the cycle of aid dependency – which aligns with the Government's multi-year strategy.

Niger is supported by the IFRC's regional [Hunger Crisis Emergency Appeal](#). Launched in October 2022,

it aims to scale up the IFRC's regional immediate and life-saving response to the food insecurity crisis currently affecting the region. The Appeal sits within the IFRC's Pan-African Zero Hunger Initiative, which informs long-term food security and livelihood plans of National Societies in Africa. This initiative undertakes a holistic approach, associating rapid support for food and nutrition security and livelihoods with a long-term strategy, working towards zero hunger and more sustainable development.

The regional Emergency Appeal focuses on responding to the immediate needs of the people affected, and its approach facilitates the transition to longer-term programming. After the Appeal has ended, the IFRC and the Niger Red Cross will continue their long-term response through Zero Hunger initiative programming, and these actions will be integrated into the Niger country plan for 2024.

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## Strategic priorities

### Climate and environment

Niger's climate is largely hot and dry. The northern half of the country is classified as desert, and most of the south has a semi-arid climate. The climate varies throughout the year – there is a long dry season from October to May and a shorter rainy season at some point between May and September. March and April are the hottest months, when temperatures can exceed 40°C, while they can drop to about 10°C between December and February. Niger's diverse and varied geography exposes it to a broad array of natural hazards, which are exacerbated by the impact of climate change.<sup>1</sup>

The El Niño Southern Oscillation creates irregular periodic variations in air and sea surface temperatures, which bring variable and extreme weather events such as heatwaves, droughts and floods. During El Niño periods, parts of Niger typically experience drier than normal conditions, and wetter conditions usually occur during La Niña periods.

The highest risk of flood hazards is mostly concentrated in the south of the country, in the regions bordering Nigeria and Chad. In addition, riverine flooding poses a threat in the Niger River Basin, where 40 per cent of the country's population is estimated to live, thus affecting about 100,000 people each year. The worst

flooding reported in 80 years occurred in 2012 – resulting in more than 300 deaths and 6,000 people injured. Overall, the flooding had an impact on approximately four million people.

Since the drought in 2011, millions of people in Niger have needed food assistance because of recurrent droughts. This has had a profound impact on livelihoods and livestock.

The droughts, along with temperature rises and increased rainfall variation, threaten human health in Niger. The most significant health risks are related to increased food insecurity and malnutrition, a surge in the spread of vector-borne, water-borne and respiratory diseases, increased death and injuries, and heat stress. These health challenges are of particular concern among children and mothers. Notably, as many as 50 per cent of children in the country are stunted.

Higher temperatures also increase the risk of heatwaves, which are expected to affect 12 per cent of the population by 2080, compared with 1.7 per cent in 2000. Another climatic risk to human health is the increase in the frequency of sandstorms, according to the World Bank. Floods also will continue to cause injury and mortality – for example, the floods in 2021 killed 77 people.

<sup>1</sup> Analysis in this section supported by the Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre: <https://www.climatecentre.org/>

## Main actions and areas of support

The Niger Red Cross is part of the IFRC's [Global Climate Resilience Programme](#), which aims to foster an unprecedented scale-up in locally led climate-smart disaster risk reduction and adaptation efforts in order to prevent and reduce climate-related disaster impacts, and build community-level climate resilience. The programme aims to support 500 million people in 100 of the most climate-vulnerable countries, focusing on the least supported and marginalized communities. This holistic, multi-year programmatic approach consists of four operational pillars: (1) scaling up climate-smart disaster risk reduction, anticipatory action and preparedness; (2) reducing the public health impacts of climate change; (3) addressing climate displacement; and (4) enabling climate-resilient livelihoods and ecosystem services.

The Niger Red Cross will focus on reducing the current and future humanitarian impacts of climate and environmental crises in the country, and helping people to adapt and thrive in the face of them. By developing early warning mechanisms, it will integrate climate risk management into all programmes, operations and advocacy, including nature-based solutions and risk management.

It is important to link humanitarian action with development (the nexus approach) to create community resilience. In 2023, the Niger Red Cross will focus on eco-resilience – managing the reduction of natural resources – supporting soil and water conservation, and soil restoration through reforestation and land recovery.

As part of the IFRC Pan African Tree Planting and Care initiative, the National Society will contribute to fight against climate change and environmental degradation by planting and maintaining trees in places that suffer from desertification and land degradation, due to adverse weather conditions and poor land use practices. This is in addition to the one day each year when every person in Niger plants at least one tree.

Communities and stakeholders working in collaboration with the Niger Red Cross will be trained on specific climate-change actions, with the aim of establishing awareness and practices that ensure climate change mitigation measures are sustainable. The National Society will enable an increase in market gardening, as seen previously in the Dosso region, through the adaptation of agricultural techniques such as tree planting and better water management.

Through the ECHO Pilot Programmatic Partnership (PPP), the National Society also plans to enable access to combined climate, socio-economic and environmental data and evidence – to help with the design and implementation of climate-smart livelihood interventions at community level. It will focus on context-specific measures that will protect communities' livelihoods and assets. This will apply to production, income generation, timely safety nets, greener supply chains and climate-smart response practices.

## Disasters and crises

Between 1973 and 2013, Niger reported more than 3,700 disasters which led to significant economic damage and the loss of more than 10,500 lives. In 2012, the national platform for disaster risk reduction was established as a mechanism to coordinate, analyze and implement actions across the country. The platform is responsible for coordinating risk prevention, and designing integrated information and communication systems for disaster risk reduction.

In 2021, food security and household livelihoods in Niger were severely impacted by the deterioration of the security situation – leading to forced displacement and worsening economic conditions – and the aftermath of the 2020 floods that damaged agricultural production. The situation was exacerbated by the persistent socio-economic impacts of COVID-19, particularly on cross-border trade and migrant remittances, and the surge in food prices. The poor agricultural and pastoral season of 2021 continued to make matters worse during 2022. The Integrated Phase Classification findings reported that between October and December 2021, 2.5 million people were food insecure – more than twice as many as the 1.2 million in the same period the year before. This figure increased to 3.6 million people between June and August 2022, 57 per cent more than the same period in 2020. This had profound consequences on the many households that had already eroded their resources and developed negative coping strategies in 2021. According to an analysis conducted by the Food Security Cluster of Niger, the number of people at risk of food insecurity in 2022 was 4.4 million people.

Seasonal shocks such as pastoral crises, the lean season, malarial outbreaks and other epidemics have exacerbated the situation, as have droughts, floods, armed conflicts and population displacements on the borders of Mali, Burkina Faso and Nigeria.

The conflicts that negatively affect Niger are mainly caused by:

- The regular incursion of non-state armed groups into Niger territory, due to insecure borders with countries such as Libya, Mali, Burkina Faso, Chad and Nigeria
- Competition for land and access to natural and water resources
- The seasonal movement of livestock, causing violence between herders and farmers
- Natural disasters such as floods, and food crises that disrupt security and stability

Other contributing factors include weak governance, poverty, the lack of economic opportunities, unemployment and low levels of education. Social networks are used to facilitate the manipulation and recruitment of young people, and cyclical factors such as inter-community tensions and the closure of certain migratory routes all add to the security risk. Porous borders are enabling increased levels of arms trafficking and drug smuggling, especially in Tahoua and Agadez. Non-state armed groups cause insecurity in all regions of Niger, apart from Dosso, Niamey and Zinder.

Niger's generally underdeveloped conditions lead to widespread humanitarian challenges, even without all the ongoing shocks and crises.

### **Main actions and areas of support**

With support from its IFRC network partners, the Niger Red Cross will support communities and local and national institutions in the development and implementation of risk management contingency plans and response mechanisms. This includes training in disaster risk management structures, and strengthening critical disaster preparedness and early action and response capacities. It plans to improve community evacuation routes, shelter and warehousing capacities, to withstand shocks.

The IFRC will support the National Society in developing its Preparedness for Effective Response (PER) capacities, to ensure that its responses reach communities in a timely and effective manner.

The National Society also aims to promote national disaster risk management and governance by advocating for effective legislation, frameworks, systems and plans.

## **Health and wellbeing**

Niger has widespread humanitarian needs in the health and well-being sector. There has been a massive displacement of people in areas of increased insecurity, due to the activism of non-state arms groups. As a result, vulnerable populations including pregnant women and children are unable to access health services. There is a high fertility rate, a high prevalence of child marriage and high rates of injuries at childbirth due to lack of access to timely medical care. As many as 76 per cent of women marry before the age of 18, and 28 per cent of them are married before the age of 15. In addition, contraceptive use is low at 21.8 per cent, and one in 24 women in Niger is at risk of dying from pregnancy, childbirth or post-natal complications.

Malnutrition is a major threat to health and development in Niger. Acute malnutrition, or wasting, affects approximately 10 to 15 per cent of children, and stunting caused by chronic malnutrition affects nearly half. Anaemia affects 61 per cent of children under five and 49 per cent of women of childbearing age – it is the leading cause of maternal mortality in Niger, accounting for 28 per cent of such deaths.

Factors such as household food insecurity, especially in rural households, poor health, sanitation and drinking water services, put pressure on health services. Less than half of people in rural areas have access to safe drinking water and only four per cent of households use improved sanitation. There is inadequate care for mothers and children, such as poor hygiene practices, feeding, and spending time with infants and young children. The high workloads and mental health of mothers is of serious concern.

The emergence of COVID-19, meningitis, cholera and measles has had a serious impact on access to health care and sanitation services. According to an analysis by Niger's health and water, sanitation and hygiene sector groups, travel restrictions have had a negative impact on health care support for vulnerable populations in all eight regions of the country.

In addition, there was a 25 per cent increase in the number of malaria cases between 2019 and 2021, because of exceptional rainfall that has caused flooding in all regions of the country, with stagnation of water and the proliferation of malaria-carrying mosquitoes.

A rise in temperature and rainfall variability, with the associated floods and droughts, also threatens human health and sanitation by increasing cases of infectious diseases such as malaria, meningitis and measles.



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It is likely that the geographical range and activeness of disease vectors like mosquitoes will increase, due to rising temperatures and floods.

Approximately 457,200 children aged six to 59 months are at risk of severe acute malnutrition, and the prevalence of acute malnutrition is 12.5 per cent nationally. This puts Niger on high alert, as it places it above the WHO malnutrition classification threshold of 10 percent.

Access to drinking water and basic hygiene and sanitation services is very low in Niger, especially in rural areas where 84 per cent of the population live. Only 45.4 per cent of households have access to basic rural drinking water services, 84.7 per cent practice open defecation, and 71.2 per cent use limited handwashing facilities. All of this significantly affects the living conditions of Niger's population. According to WHO, Niger has one of the highest mortality rates from water-borne diseases, affecting 71 in every 100,000 people.

### **Main actions and areas of support**

The COVID-19 pandemic and its secondary impacts will continue to affect people's health in 2023 and beyond. Over the past two years, the introduction and administration of vaccines have allowed a return to normal, but national vaccination coverage is below target. This is primarily attributed to vaccine hesitancy caused by myths and beliefs.

The fight against COVID-19 will be reinforced through a continent-wide initiative between the IFRC and Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to

invest in building resilient public health security infrastructure in Africa. Under the USD 39 million Saving Lives and Livelihoods initiative funded by Mastercard Foundation, the IFRC and African National Societies are building a programme that aims to ensure that 60 per cent of African people are vaccinated against COVID-19. The partnership between the Mastercard Foundation and Africa CDC will support the procurement and delivery of tens of millions of COVID-19 vaccines and hasten economic recovery on the continent.

Under this programme, the Niger Red Cross will deliver critical risk communication and community engagement activities to vulnerable communities, in support of COVID-19 vaccine uptake. Other programme partners will provide procurement and logistics services to a central warehouse (UNICEF), in-country logistics (World Food Programme), managing COVID-19 vaccination centres (Amref Health Africa and GHHS) and safety surveillance (Akros). Across Africa, the National Societies will work with partners in the Saving Lives and Livelihoods programme to achieve its objective of reaching at least 60 per cent of the continent's population with COVID-19 vaccines.

The Niger Red Cross volunteers will engage with communities through community information centres, interactive radio and television sessions, and door-to-door campaigns. The National Society's contribution to accelerating immunization is well recognized by the Government and other partners.



Community engagement and empowerment will be a key strategy to provide health care information related to the prevention of communicable diseases.

The outbreak of infectious diseases, such as cholera in 2022, means that the authorities must maintain active disease surveillance activities and a rapid response mechanism when there are outbreaks of infectious diseases like cholera. The Niger Red Cross has a network of branches and volunteers to support the authorities in early detection, contact tracing, social mobilization and community engagement, to fight the disease outbreaks.

The National Society will continue its activities in the areas of water and sanitation, nutrition, basic health care, sexual and reproductive health care, and psychosocial support. Activities will include some income-generating activities for communities.

## Migration and displacement

Niger is a country of origin, transit and destination – a migration hub for many people who travel to West and Central Africa, or who choose to migrate to North Africa and Europe. The country also hosts many refugees in camps on the border with Mali and Nigeria. According to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), it faces internal displacement of 264,000 people, in the areas surrounding the borders of Tillabéri, Tahoua and Diffa. Since 2017, hundreds of asylum seekers have added to this figure, having left Libya and transiting through Niger, to have their status examined before a potential resettlement. Disasters, mainly flooding, triggered 118,000 displacements in 2021, lower than the previous year.<sup>2</sup>

By 2050, Niger is projected to have the highest number of internal climate migrants in West Africa, up to 19.1 million people, if no action is taken.

One study found that more than half of its respondents had a family member who had been forced to migrate for work, because of droughts, floods, wildfires, changing rainfall patterns or desertification affecting their livelihoods. Climate-induced internally displaced people have not always been recognized in Niger, unless they were also displaced by conflict. This distinction was apparent in the country's 2018 law on the protection of and assistance to internally displaced people, which highlights the need for further awareness-raising and advocacy on behalf of people migrating because of climate-related factors.

Both rural and urban migration are predicted to rise as rainfall fluctuations and rising temperatures continue, while drought is already, and will remain, a significant driver of migration and displacement.

In 2020, Niger experienced serious difficulties both in terms of population movement and growing insecurity. In addition, COVID-19 severely affected economic growth and brought Niger to the brink of economic collapse. This is profoundly disappointing for all the people hoping for a better future.

As a consequence of all these factors, there is a complex and multidimensional migration and displacement situation in Niger, including:

- Migration within national borders
- Migration of people from Niger to the countries of the sub-region, to the Maghreb countries or overseas destinations such as Europe, America or Asia
- Transit migration of nationals of other countries crossing Niger for other destinations
- Refugees arriving after fleeing insecurity in neighbouring countries and seeking asylum
- Returning or repatriated people from Niger coming from other host countries

## Main actions and areas of support

The Niger Red Cross is part of the IFRC's three-year Global Route-Based Migration Programme, which aims to improve the safety and dignity of people on the move along deadly and dangerous land and sea-based migration routes across Africa, the Americas, Europe, and the Middle East and North Africa. The programme aims to support 4.7 million people on the move and people in host communities annually through three operational pillars: (1) improving access to assistance and protection, including through humanitarian service points; (2) strengthening National Society capacities; and (3) local to global humanitarian diplomacy.

The Niger Red Cross will:

- Continue implementation of its 2019–2021 migration strategy, which aims to reduce abuse and alleviate the suffering of migrants through a range of humanitarian actions, including strengthening resilience in communities and advocating for migrants' rights

<sup>2</sup> Analysis in this section supported by the Red Cross Red Crescent Global Migration Lab: <https://www.redcross.org.au/globalmigrationlab/>

- Identify and capture best practices at the regional level and share experiences with other regions involved in migration activities
- Influence decision-makers at local, national and international levels to ensure greater awareness, assistance and protection of migrants in strategic planning and policy development
- Raise awareness of the need for humanitarian assistance, protection and behaviour change activities carried out by African National Societies in countries of origin, transit and destination

The IFRC also plans to revise the African regional migration strategy, in line with the experience it has gained in working with migrants in Africa.

### Values, power and inclusion

People in Niger face a variety of protection risks, many of which relate to the activities of armed groups. The [Global Protection Cluster](#) notes specific risks related to the extortion of goods, abductions and kidnapping, attacks on civilians and infrastructures, the early return of internally displaced persons, and the presence of mines and other explosives. Services to respond to sexual and gender-based violence are [insufficient to meet needs](#), and access to these services is often difficult.

In the Sahel region, it was estimated that 6.3 million children under five would suffer from malnutrition in 2022. Of these, more than 1.4 million would experience severe acute malnutrition, representing a 62 per cent increase compared with 2018. Children in the east and south of Niger, particularly in the Maradi and Zinder regions, are the most affected by malnutrition. Families facing one of the most difficult seasons in a decade are sharing scarce food supplies with people fleeing violence. However, according to [Save the Children](#), the crisis is under-reported and is largely underfunded.

In 2020, the IFRC began supporting the Niger Red Cross in understanding the concepts of values, power and inclusion, coordinating initiatives and integrating new activities into its programmes.

In 2021, the IFRC launched pilot initiatives to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse, as part of

COVID-19 and integrated community case management projects. Using the Global Women's Institute at George Washington University's concept of empowered aid, the IFRC and the National Society engaged consultants with expertise in preventing and responding to sexual and gender-based violence. They conducted conversations with women and adolescent girls at the community level about personal safety risks during the distribution of humanitarian aid.

The IFRC also organized two workshops on preventing and responding to sexual harassment in the workplace. This produced more than 30 recommendations for action by the IFRC and its partners.

The IFRC and Niger Red Cross will pay increased attention to the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse when identifying and distributing food and non-food items. They will build the capacity for this and implement the appropriate activities with the support of the French Red Cross and civil society organizations in Niger such as Femmes, Actions et Développement.

### Main actions and areas of support

The IFRC will continue to develop an integrated approach to coordinating the many Movement actors that are working on protection, gender and inclusion issues in Niger.

It will support the Niger Red Cross in the development of its policies, and in the training of staff and volunteers, ensuring that protection, gender and inclusion is incorporated into all programming.

The IFRC will support people at risk of, or survivors of, sexual and gender-based violence, to increase their capacity to prevent, respond to and mitigate the risks. This will be done through a coordinated development of standards and programming tools.

The National Society will strengthen the protection against sexual and gender-based violence component in schools. Furthermore, it will include minority groups and people of all gender identities and backgrounds in its programmes. It will also establish systems for community engagement and accountability, and complaints management, at operational sites.

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## Enabling local actors

The Red Cross Society of Niger's leadership team recognizes that several aspects of the organization are weak and require additional support. The National Society is actively seeking further support in organizational development from the IFRC network. An Organisational Capacity Assessment and Certification (OCAC) was conducted in March 2019, along with Branch Organisational Capacity Assessment training, and this exercise highlighted that interventions are needed in the following areas:

- Financial management and auditing
- Resource mobilization
- Human resources and policy creation
- Volunteer management
- Planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting
- Strategic planning
- Information communications technology

### Engaged

The Niger Red Cross has urged the Government to review some of the resources that the National Society could benefit from, as an auxiliary to the authorities. The aim is to improve the National Society's ability to address existing and emerging challenges in the delivery of humanitarian aid.

The IFRC will work in coordination with the Niger Red Cross to facilitate and improve communications with vulnerable populations. It will make computer equipment and an adequate internet connection available to local and regional structures. These efforts will facilitate the National Society's access to information and promote a more effective reporting system. It will also carry out information technology (IT) training to improve the computer literacy of staff and volunteers.

The National Society will increase its visibility and public trust through communications and public advocacy. It will strengthen its auxiliary role with local and national partners in Niger, and function well as a coordinated network with other organizations.

### Accountable

The IFRC will work with the Niger Red Cross on its resource mobilization strategy, increasing partnerships and mobilizing resources to better meet the humanitarian needs of vulnerable people. The National Society

aims to hold its statutory meetings in a coherent manner, expand its presence at all district chapters, and carry out emergency response and health promotion activities as required.

The COVID-19 pandemic will continue to affect the National Society's operations in 2023 and beyond. Working closely with partners on the rollout of immunization will be an integral part of its activities.

The IFRC will assist the National Society in developing a robust national operational plan with a monitoring and reporting system, in its efforts towards Federation-wide planning and reporting.

The IFRC and the National Society will develop a strategy and action plan to mitigate the risks of fraud and corruption, sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse within the organization. It will also strengthen financial policies and systems, to increase organizational efficiency.

### Trusted

With the aim of better responding to the needs of its communities, the Niger Red Cross has developed a strategy covering the period 2022–2026. It focuses on the following pillars:

- Clear distinctions between governance and management
- The strengthening of branches
- The development of Niger Red Cross youth and volunteers

The IFRC will strengthen the National Society's disaster risk reduction structure by training 40 members of the national disaster response team, in accordance with the recommendations made at the National Society's special annual general meeting. Trainees will share their acquired knowledge by training more trainers in their respective regions and local branches. Guidelines have also been developed for branches on a number of topics.

The Niger Red Cross has access to the entire territory of the country through its network of volunteers because of the respect it has gained in its humanitarian work. Today, as in the past, volunteers are at the heart of all the National Society's interventions, and 10,000 of them play an important role in aiding thousands of people throughout Niger.

With the support of its Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners and the IFRC Capacity Building Fund, the Niger Red Cross is working towards setting up a database to improve the management of information

it has about its volunteers. The data protection component will be strengthened in 2023. The National Society will also train its volunteers in specific areas.

## THE IFRC NETWORK

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### The IFRC

**The IFRC** has been present in Niger since 2010, with its former country delegation converted into a country cluster delegation covering Niger, Burkina Faso, Mali and Côte d'Ivoire in 2021. The IFRC supports the Niger Red Cross with strategic and operational coordination, National Society development, and humanitarian diplomacy. It also supports accountability as a cross-cutting theme.

In recent years, the IFRC has supported the Niger Red Cross for multiple emergencies, including [operations](#) funded through Emergency Appeals and the Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF) in relation to floods, disease outbreaks, population movement, food crises and complex emergency situations. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the IFRC, through its global Appeal, has supported the National Society in its COVID-19 response and for the immunization rollout programme in Africa. The IFRC also provides programmatic, technical and financial support to the National Society, including health, food security and livelihoods, and assists with its organizational development.

The IFRC contributes to membership coordination, and provides services and support on finance, planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting, risk management, human resources, logistics, security, communications and resource mobilization. It organizes strategic meetings on the development and implementation of the unified country plan, and a number of working groups focus on topics such as health, organizational development and disaster risk reduction.

### IFRC membership coordination

The IFRC coordination involves working with member National Societies to assess the humanitarian context, humanitarian situations and needs; agreeing common priorities; co-developing common strategies to address issues such as obtaining greater humanitarian access, acceptance and space; mobilizing funding and other resources; clarifying consistent public messaging; and monitoring progress. This also means ensuring that

strategies and programmes in support of people in need incorporate clarity of humanitarian action, development assistance, and the auxiliary role efforts to reinforce the role of National Societies in their respective countries.

Niger Red Cross is part of the IFRC network New Way of Working initiative, which is piloted in 14 countries. It aims at establishing a new model of membership coordination, working over multiple years to instil thorough change management in the ways the IFRC network works together and placing the National Society of the country at the centre. This includes prioritizing effective coordination for much greater gains, optimizing the power of working as one IFRC network by sharing resources, learnings and common standards, and to ultimately achieve greater impact. Particular attention is given to collective planning to ensure that National Society partners present in country participate in one multi-year country plan, which will ensure that the resources and expertise of the network in country are used in a complementary and efficient way.

The Niger Red Cross is part of the four IFRC Pan-African Initiatives focusing on Tree Planting and Care; Zero Hunger; Red Ready; and National Society Development. These initiatives are reflected under the relevant sections of this plan.

Niger is part of the [Pilot Programmatic Partnership](#), a three-year collaboration between the IFRC and the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO PPP). The Belgian Red Cross, French Red Cross and Luxembourg Red Cross (as the lead EU National Society) support the National Society in Niger on all five thematic areas of the PPP, including disaster risk management, epidemic and pandemic preparedness and response, humanitarian assistance and protection for people on the move, cash and voucher assistance, and community engagement and accountability. The partnership meets the realities of extended crises with longer-term predictable funding, facilitating actions and processes with greater impact. It leverages the IFRC's global network and unique access to people and communities, and it helps to fulfil the ambitions of the European Union as the biggest donor for international aid in the world.

## Participating National Society Support - Bilateral

Name of Partner NS	Funding Requirements	Climate	Disasters and crises	Health and wellbeing	Migration	Values, power and inclusion	Engaged	Accountable	Trusted
Belgian Red Cross	CHF 0.57M	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
British Red Cross		●	●				●	●	●
Danish Red Cross	CHF 0.64M		●	●		●	●	●	●
Finnish Red Cross	CHF 0.20M			●		●			
French Red Cross	CHF 3.67M	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Italian Red Cross	CHF 0.07M						●	●	●
Luxembourg Red Cross	CHF 5.10M	●	●			●		●	●
Spanish Red Cross	CHF 1.36M		●	●	●	●		●	●
Swedish Red Cross						●	●	●	●

### Total

11.61M

Participating National Societies supporting the Niger Red Cross are as follows:

The **Belgian Red Cross** has been supporting the Niger Red Cross since 2012, initially through a partnership with the Irish Red Cross. It has had an in-country presence since 2017 and its main areas of intervention are strengthening community resilience, disaster preparedness and response, and population displacement. Its activities include:

- Skills development, including resilience, community engagement and accountability, protection, gender and inclusion, and disaster risk management
- Branch development, including at the village level
- Support for income-generating activities
- The structuring and establishment of technical departments such as disaster risk management and cash and voucher assistance, and the acquisition of equipment and infrastructure

**British Red Cross** has been present in Niger since 2015, and it focuses its support on:

- Migration: supporting vulnerable migrants along their journey (food, health, protection, restoring family links) in Agadez
- Hunger prevention: supporting sustainable livelihoods and improved nutrition for children through Mothers' Clubs in Zinder
- Protection from sexual and gender-based violence: awareness raising in communities on the consequences of sexual and gender-based violence, and available support to survivors in Zinder
- Cash preparedness: ensuring that the National Society is ready to use cash distributions in emergencies
- Disaster preparedness and anticipatory action: through forecast based financing programming, supporting the development of Early Action Protocols for drought and food insecurity in Zinder

The **Danish Red Cross** has been present in Niger since 2017. It provides technical and financial support to the Niger Red Cross in humanitarian assistance, food security, access to health services, protection, and psychosocial support, in particular in migration and displacement contexts. Through a partnership with the Finnish Red Cross, support is also provided to address women and girls' sexual and reproductive health, and their rights. These efforts strengthen the National Society's responses to shocks and crises faced by Niger's vulnerable populations. The Danish Red Cross supports interventions in Niamey, Tillabéri, Zinder, Maradi and Diffa.

The **French Red Cross** has been present in Niger since 1998. It has a permanent operational presence in Agadez, Zinder, Tahoua and Tillabéri, and it also intervenes in other regions as required by Niger Red Cross. It works primarily in the areas of health, and water, sanitation and hygiene (including for people living with HIV), providing access to drinking water and sanitation, primary health care, including epidemic prevention, nutrition, psychosocial support, health system strengthening, mother and child health, support for migrants' mental health and protection, prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual and gender based violence. It also supports disaster risk management and reduction, including prevention, mitigation, preparedness, anticipation and response, and migration.

The **Italian Red Cross's** relationship with the Niger Red Cross dates back to the 1980s, and it has had a permanent delegation in the country since the end of 2019. Between 2018 and 2019, it provided a delegate with expertise in organizational development to Niger Red Cross. It works mainly in education, and on organizational development, including youth and volunteering, and income generating activities.

In addition, the Italian Red Cross has supported the strengthening and development of the regional committee of Agadez, through its city primary school construction project.

The **Luxembourg Red Cross** has had a presence in Niger since 2012. Its areas of intervention are disaster risk reduction and disaster management, water and sanitation, climate change and livelihoods. The main areas of intervention are the regions of Niamey, Dosso, Diffa, Tillabéri, Tahoua and Maradi. It also provides support in the area of migration, and in capacity strengthening of volunteers and branches of Niger Red Cross.

The **Spanish Red Cross** began operating in Niger in 1984, supporting the Niger Red Cross with the implementation of emergency, humanitarian and development projects. Since 2005, it has maintained a permanent presence through its delegation in Niamey, and works in the following areas:

- Livelihoods and food security, with a focus on a Mothers' Club and empowering women
- Humanitarian assistance and protection to migrants in transit, and access to basic services in Tahoua
- Humanitarian assistance and protection to Malian refugees in Tillabéri and Niger refugees in Maradi, with the provision of water and sanitation, and the strengthening of livelihoods
- Support for the COVID-19 vaccination plan, to save lives and contain the pandemic
- Prevention of sexual violence against women in Maradi
- Activities in Niamey, Tahoua, Maradi and Tillabéri, with the involvement of more than 48 Niger Red Cross staff and the technical expertise of five international staff

The Swedish Red Cross supports the National Society in Niger in the area of protection.

In addition, while not present in Niger, the **Australian Red Cross** and the **Finnish Red Cross** fund projects and programmes that cover health, early action protocols, resilience, protection and migration.

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## Movement coordination

Senior management meetings between the Niger Red Cross, the IFRC and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) enable effective Movement coordination in Niger, a country with multi-layered crises and needs. A Movement coordination agreement and its annex on the Movement Security Framework were prepared and signed in May 2020, between the IFRC,

the ICRC and the National Society. The IFRC supports Movement coordination with the Niger Red Cross and the ICRC in response to the drought in Niger, along with participating National Societies. Monthly Movement meetings are organized on all interventions, and a separate technical working group has been set up to address the food insecurity response. This is carried out in line

with the Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation (SMCC) principles, and the newly adopted [Seville Agreement 2.0](#).

In Niger, the ICRC supports people affected by conflict in the southeast and people fleeing fighting in north-east Nigeria. Alongside the Niger Red Cross, it delivers aid, treats the wounded, provides water and supports farmers. The ICRC monitors international humanitarian law compliance, protects detainees and helps them maintain contact with their families. The ICRC also participates in the implementation of the Movement's

emergency plan for food security, through targeted free food distribution operations, setting up cereal banks, cash distribution activities for vulnerable households, and health treatment and feed banks for livestock animals. The ICRC's activities are mainly concentrated in high-risk regions such as Tillabéri, Diffa, Agadez and Tahoua. The IFRC supports this work by strategically coordinating with the ICRC, other Movement members and external actors, engaging in humanitarian diplomacy and increasing resource mobilization efforts.

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## Coordination with other actors

As an auxiliary of the public authorities, the Niger Red Cross enjoys privileged relations with the authorities, and works closely with the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Humanitarian Action and Disaster Management, the Ministry of Protection, the Ministry of Hydraulics and others. At the local level, the Niger Red Cross works closely with communal authorities, management committees at displaced persons' sites, health centres, customary authorities and community leaders. All interventions are discussed with the relevant authorities and no action is undertaken without prior consultation.

The IFRC and the Niger Red Cross have been actively engaged in humanitarian coordination at the national level and in the technical clusters and working groups – particularly in the areas of food security, water, sanitation and hygiene, and health.

The Niger Red Cross regularly collaborates with external partners such as UN agencies, WHO, UNDP, UNICEF, WFP, FAO, OCHA, UNFPA and IOM, as it carries out its humanitarian activities.

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- [IFRC Global Plan and Country Plans](#)
- [Subscribe for updates](#)
- [Donor response](#) on IFRC website
- [Live Disaster Response Emergency Fund \(DREF\)](#) data
- Operational information: [IFRC GO platform](#)
- National Society data: [IFRC Federation-wide Databank and Reporting System](#)



**The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)** is the world's largest humanitarian network, with **192 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies** and around **14 million volunteers**. Our volunteers are present in communities before, during and after a crisis or disaster. We work in the most hard to reach and complex settings in the world, saving lives and promoting human dignity. We support communities to become stronger and more resilient places where people can live safe and healthy lives, and have opportunities to thrive.

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